

Seattle Psychoanalytic Society and Institute

SELF PSYCHOLOGY

Year Three Psychoanalytic Training, 2020-2021

Instructors: Susan Radant, Ph.D. and Don Schimmel, Ph.D.

December 4, 2020 through March 12, 2021, 3:30 to 5:00 pm

Welcome to our course on Self Psychology. Our objective is to create with you, a safe, stimulating and dynamic learning environment. We will be exploring the central theoretical foundations and the contemporary theories of Self Psychology, and their application to clinical practice. In addition, we will apply these concepts to contemporary issues such as racism, antisemitism, trauma and the gaslighting of America by Donald Trump. We will read some of the original works by the founder of Self Psychology, Heinz Kohut, as well as scholarly articles by contemporary Self Psychologists. In the final class, we will be watching the film, "Reflections on Empathy," which was Heinz Kohut's final presentation before he died a few days later. We wish to provide with a diverse experience, which will stimulate your interest and curiosity in Self Psychology.

Unless otherwise stated, all articles are accessible on PEP Web. Any article or chapter not on PEP Web will be made available as a PDF file prior to the first class.

Course Objectives:

At the end of this course, the clinical associate will be able to:

1. List the central concepts of Self Psychology, as originally conceived by Kohut, and understand how they represent a paradigmatic shift from earlier theories of psychoanalysis.
2. Describe and define the following Self Psychological concepts:
 - Empathy, empathic failures, vicarious introspection, optimal frustration;
 - The roles of shame and guilt;
 - The secondary development of rage and aggression;
 - Description and diagnosis of disorders of the self;
 - The "bipolar self" and associated transferences: mirroring, alterego and idealizing;
 - The "vertical and horizontal splits;"
 - Selfobject transferences;
 - How analysis cures through transmuting internalization, structure building, and the emergence of the nuclear self.
3. Apply Self Psychology to contemporary race and cultural issues, which will provide us with an understanding of how to work clinically with diverse groups of people.

4. Apply Self Psychological concepts to pathology such as sociopathy, malignant narcissism, bigotry and sadism.
5. Define the function and uses of empathy.

SELF PSYCHOLOGY: WINTER 2020-2021

December 4, 2020: Introduction: This class will provide an introduction to the major concepts in Self Psychology, as well as an introduction to the work of Heinz Kohut. To help explain Kohut's classic paper (it is quite dense), we'll use an excerpt from Wolf's book to make his concepts clearer and more digestible.

- Kohut, H (1968). The Psychoanalytic Treatment of Narcissistic Personality Disorders – Outline of a Systematic Approach. *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 22: 86-113
- Wolf, E (1988). Treating the Self. The Guilford Press, New York. Chapter 3, Basic Concepts of Self Psychology, pp.23-49. (Not available on PEP.)

December 11, 2020: Selfobjects and Selfobject Transferences: This class will provide an introduction to selfobjects, as the subjective aspect of a self-sustaining function, performed by a relationship of the self to objects. We will discuss types of selfobjects, selfobject transferences, and how these displaced needs onto the therapist represent archaic and age-appropriate selfobject needs.

- Kohut, H. (1971) The Analysis of the Self. International Universities Press, Inc. (Not available on PEP.)
 - Chapter 2, The Idealizing Transference, pp. 37 - 55
 - Chapter 5, Types of Mirror Transferences: A Classification According to Developmental Considerations, pp. 105 – 132

January 8, 2021: Disorders of the Self: This class will cover the variety of disorders of the self, including developmental considerations, aetiology (primary and secondary disorders of the self), psychopathology and symptomatology, and treatment considerations. Again, Wolf's paper is used to clarify the earlier paper, and bring us to a more contemporary understanding.

- Kohut, H and Wolf, E (1978). The Disorders of the Self and their Treatment: An Outline. *IJP*, 59: 413-425
- Wolf, E. (1994). Varieties of the Disorders of the Self. *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, 11 (2): 198-208

January 15, 2021: Empathy: This class will explore the process of empathy as a means of accessing another's psychological state, by feeling oneself into the other's experience. Empathy is also means of data collection and a self-sustaining experience for the patient. Additionally, we will explore more contemporary views that push the envelope from empathy as a depth oriented technique toward more authentic feeling states that present within a treatment.

- Perlit, D. (2016). Beyond Kohut: From Empathy to Affection. *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology*. 11: 248-262.
- Tuch, R.H. (1997). Beyond Empathy: Confronting Certain Complexities In Self Psychology Theory. *Psychoanal Q.*, 66:259-282.

January 22, 2021: The Vertical Split and Horizontal Split: This class will explore and explain the often confusing concepts of the vertical and horizontal splits. Goldberg is clear and cogent in his writing, so the reading should be easy. We will cover the phenomenology of the vertical split, the function of disavowal and dissociation, and varieties of splits.

- Goldberg, A. (1999). Being of Two Minds, The Vertical Split in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy. The Analytic Press, Inc., Hillsdale NJ. (Not available on PEP.)
 - Chapter 1: Introductory Remarks. Pp. 3-6
 - Chapter 2: The Problem, pp. 7-20
 - Chapter 3: the Failure of Synthesis, pp. 21-42
 - Chapter 10: Varieties of the Split, pp. 139-150

January 29, 2021: Treatment: This class will explore Kohut's definition of the therapeutic goal: mobilization of narcissistic needs within in the transference, in order to build psychic structure through the process of transmuting internalization. The role of the empathic bond between therapist and patient will be discussed in a variety of contexts including the process of optimal frustration, correct interpretations, and the formation of patients' own empathic acceptance of themselves.

- Kohut, H. (1984). How Does Analysis Cure? University of Chicago Press, Chicago. (Not available on PEP.)
 - Chapter 6, The Curative Effect of Analysis: The Self Psychological Reassessment of the Therapeutic Process, pp. 80 – 110
 - Chapter 9, The Role of Empathy in Psychoanalytic Cure, pp. 172 - 191

February 5, 2021: Other Important Concepts: This class will the role of aggression and rage, and the "Forward Edge" transference. Self Psychology has often been criticized by more classically trained analysts for "avoiding" aggression and rage. But as you will see in the paper by Strozier, et. al. that aggression is important; it is just not viewed the same as in ego psychology or object relations theory. The Forward Edge transference is clinically important as it refers to remobilized and still healthy strivings in the patient that should be recognized and fostered.

- Strozier et al (2017). Heinz Kohut's Theory of Aggression and Rage. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*. 34 (3) 361-367 (Not available on PEP.)
- Tolpin, M (2002). Chapter 11, Doing Psychoanalysis of Normal Development: Forward Edge Transferences. *Progress in Self Psychology*, 18: 167-190.

February 19, 2021: Race and Self Psychology: This class will explore the application of Self Psychology to race and diversity, from both a theoretical and a clinical perspective.

- Jacobs, L. (2016). Racializing Kohut's "Guilty Man" and "Tragic Man": Serious Play in the Service of Inclusiveness. *Int. J. Psychoanal. Self Psychol.*, 11(4):340-348.
- Kella, R. (2015). Can I Wash Away My Skin Color? Compulsive Hand-Washing in a Ten-and-a-Half-Year-Old Girl. *Int. J. Psychoanal. Self Psychol.*, 10(4):365-377.

February 26, 2021: Contemporary Application of Self Psychology: In this class we will apply Self Psychology to the concepts of evil, gaslighting, power, and manipulation as we examine the way it's been used by Donald Trump and Nazi perpetrators.

- Gaslighting the Pandemic: Donald Trump, Lies, Manipulation and Power, June 20, 2020, George Hagman, LCSW and Harry Paul, Ph.D. from the IAPSP website. (Not available on PEP.)
- Laub, D. and Auerhahn, N. (2020). Probing the Minds of Nazi Perpetrators: The Use of Defensive Screens in Two Generations. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, Vol. 101, No. 2, 355-374. (Not available on PEP.)

March 5, 2021: Contemporary views on Self Psychology:

We will look at the evolution of Self psychology from Kohut's original one person psychology into a two person intersubjective theory. In addition we will explore the development of the selfobject from being merely a function to part of a two person psychology with a relational interaction.

- Magid, B & Shane, E (2017) Relational Self Psychology, *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*, 12:1, 3-19, (Not available on PEP.)
- Magid, B & Shane, E.(2018) The Restoration of the Selfobject, *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*, 13:3, 246-258, (Not available on PEP.)

March 12, 2021: Film: "Reflections on Empathy" with comments from Strozier. (No reading assignment.) This poignant film is a classic. This was Kohut's last presentation before he died a few days later. Kohut reflects on the importance and relevance of empathy, taking him back to the beginning of the development of Self Psychology. We will provide some context to the film, watch it and discuss it.